

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 00770 091831Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /059 W
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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6697

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, IT

SUBJECT: QUAI'S FIRST REACTION TO ITALY'S POLITICAL
CRISIS

1. QUAI ITALIAN DESK OFFICER DEBENEST TELLS US THAT
QUAI, LIKE OTHERS, IS THOROUGHLY PUZZLED BY PSI'S
DECISION TO PRECIPITATE MAJOR CRISIS AT THIS TIME.
SINCE PSI MUST KNOW THAT CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS CANNOT
ACCEPT ITS CONDITIONS, THE CRISIS WILL THIS TIME ALMOST
INEVITABLY BE LONG, DIFFICULT AND RESULT IN NEW ELEC-
TIONS. IN SUCH ELECTIONS, QUAI THINKS PSI MIGHT CON-
CEIVABLY GAIN AN ADDITIONAL FIVE PERCENT OF VOTE.
HOWEVER, THIS WOULD NEITHER PUT IT INTO RANKS WITH
TWO MAJOR PARTIES NOR CHANGE PROPORTIONS BETWEEN THEM
SIGNIFICANTLY. WHAT PSI EXPECTS TO OBTAIN BY THIS MOVE,
WHICH CAN ONLY SET ITALY BACK FURTHER, IS THEREFORE
VERY UNCLEAR.

2. AT SAME TIME, DEBENEST TOOK OCCASION TO EXPRESS IN
VERY BLUNT TERMS QUAI'S DISTRESS AT MOST RECENT
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PAGE 02 PARIS 00770 091831Z

WASHINGTON REVELATIONS ABOUT ALLEGED DECISION TO

SUPPLY FURTHER COVERT FUNDING FOR ITALIAN CONSERVATIVE PARTIES. SUCH MAJOR INDISCRETION AT THIS TIME CAN ONLY FURTHER AID PCI WHICH NOW HAS EVEN MORE PLAUSIBLE CASE THAT IT IS ONLY ITALIAN PARTY WHOSE HANDS ARE CLEAN. WHILE DEBENEST DID NOT THINK CIA FUNDING STORY WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO TIP BALANCE, SINCE IT IS ONLY ONE OF MANY FACTORS AFFECTING ITALIAN POLITICAL SCENE, IT WAS CLEAR THAT QUAI CONSIDERS IT DELETERIOUS AND DISTURBING.

RUSH

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